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REMARKS

This responds to the office action mailed November 22, 2004 in connection with the above identified patent application. Prior to entry of this amendment, claims 1-26 were pending in the application. Claim 8, 11, 12, 20 and 21 were amended by preliminary amendment to delete the multiple dependencies. By this amendment, claims 1, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 24 have been amended and new claim 27 has been added. Claims 1 and 27 are the only independent claims.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosures was objected to because of the inclusion of legal phraseology such as "comprises". The abstract has been amended and is respectfully submitted to be in the proper form.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims have been carefully reviewed and amended and are now respectfully submitted to be fully definite as required by § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by either Detsch et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,526,841 or U.S. Pat. No. 6,019,117. Claims 1-26 were also rejected under 35 USC. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Castellini EP 734,692 A2.

The applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections. Claim 1 recites an apparatus for supplying and

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sanitizing the water line of a dental unit, having *switching means connected to first control means* and operated manually or triggered automatically upon the occurrence of defined events in the dental unit and, depending on the type of treatment. The switching means are designed to determine successive manual or automatic operating combinations and/or sequences that may be repeated two or more times, during which the first, second and third shutoff elements are opened and closed in such a way as to perform cycles of treatment on the first branch with the first fluid and/or alternatively with the second fluid conveyed by the second branch.

In contrast, Detsch does not show *switching means connected to first control means* of the type described in claim 1 of the present application. Indeed, both Detsch documents show switching means which insert air into the main line or into the first and second branches.

Castellini also does not show *switching means connected to first control means*.

In the present invention, the switching means determine successive operating combinations that may be repeated two or more times, during which the first, second and third shutoff elements are opened and closed in such a way as to perform cycles of treatment on the first branch with the first fluid and/or alternatively with the second fluid conveyed by the second branch. For these reasons, applicant points out that claim 1 is new over of the prior art cited by the Examiner. Since claims 2-26 depend directly and indirectly upon and contain all the limitation of claim 1, these dependent claims are submitted to be patentable with claim 1.

New claim 27 is also submitted to define patentably over the prior art of record.

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In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the above rejections is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record but not applied by the Examiner has been carefully considered but is submitted to be less relevant than the references previously discussed. All matters having been addressed above and in view of the pending claims and remarks, the applicant respectfully requests the entry of this amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicant's counsel remains ready to assist the Examiner in any way to facilitate and expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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